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INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 4728  
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RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 4853  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0570

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 001818

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/05/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [UN](#) [UNGA](#) [KV](#) [KS](#)  
SUBJECT: ROK SHARES CONCERNS ABOUT KOSOVO ADVISORY OPINION  
REQUEST

REF: STATE 91908

Classified By: POL M/C Joseph Y. Yun. Reasons 1.4(b/d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Korea shares U.S. concerns about the political implications of an Advisory Opinion (AO) from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the matter of Kosovo's declaration of independence, but is worried it will be difficult to keep the Serbia-introduced resolution off the UNGA agenda. While it needs more time to develop its position on this issue, Korea intends to consult closely with the U.S., EU countries, and countries elsewhere that recognize Kosovo's independence. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) United Nations Deputy Director Kweon Ki-hwan told PolOff that Korea understands and shares U.S. concerns that the request for the ICJ opinion on Kosovo could create instability in the Balkans, produce uncertainty in Kosovo's relations with other countries, and bring about unpredictable consequences in the region and elsewhere. Though the potential political consequences are worrisome, Deputy Director Kweon noted, the request itself may be viewed as a procedural matter and therefore may not arouse much opposition. Serbia and Russia appear to be determined and confident the request will make the UNGA agenda. If it does, stopping it will be a "tough fight" for Korea, the U.S., and other nations recognizing Kosovo's independence.

¶3. (C) Korea needs more time, Deputy Director Kweon said, to develop a position that addresses both its concerns about an ICJ AO and the procedural difficulties of stopping a request for one. It would, however, cooperate and consult with the U.S. and others while formulating a response.

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